

Help When Needed

The night was pitch-black and the white dashes that rushed by down the center of the road were the only indicators that human beings inhabited this lonely stretch of the world. Those and the overstated roar of the straight pipes which expelled the exhausted gases from Tommy's Harley Davidson. It seemed like Tom Smith had been gone from home forever, since he had shipped out for the Korean Conflict. He had missed Momma, Len, Glenn, and Little Danny while doing his duty as a sailor in the South China Sea. Now he was on his way to Mieners Oaks, home again after three long years. The Navy didn't pay much, but the accumulation of funds accounted for the new Harley between his knees, the black leathers, and a new lease on life. Tommy was going places, now that he was finished with this war, and he was in a hurry to get there. He wasn't quite sure where "there" was, but the black Harley Davidson was going to be his ticket to the fast lane.

This winding Southern California highway would eventually spit Tommy out about six blocks from the house that Momma had lived in for years, where he had spent his teenage years climbing the oaks, chasing rabbits- and an occasional girl- and swimming in the river. This little foothill village backed up against the Coast Range of California and provided a perfect backdrop for growing up in the brave new world that spun out of World War Two. All of this was going through Tommy's mind as he raced up Highway 399 to meet his destiny and stake his claim on the future. Even in the gloomy darkness of the night, he reveled in the bright future of a veteran returning to his life, unscathed by the ravages of war. Around a curve came two feeble lights, heralding the approach of an automobile in the south-bound lane. As Tommy swept his way around the bend, the lights suddenly converged on the hurtling Harley in the northbound lane, and like a homing beacon guided the steel missile into a grinding collision, explosion, and fire. For Tommy there was no fear, no pain, no remembrance. Only a further darkness engulfed him.

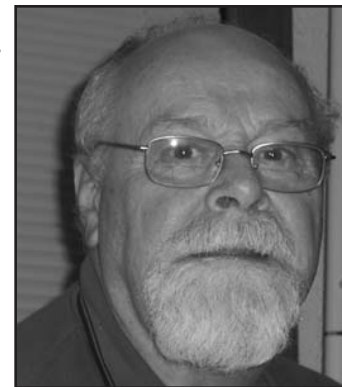
Tom Smith felt, for a long time, that it would have been better to have passed into permanent oblivion than to have awakened to the pain of shattered dreams. After the pain subsided, he was left with a twisted, shattered body that would take months, maybe years of rehab, and promised to never work efficiently again as it had before. The mental scars would be equally difficult to overcome, and then there was the collection of cardboard boxes out back which was all that was left of the new Harley. That didn't really bother him because the doctor said he would even have trouble ever walking again.

because the doctor said he would even have trouble ever walking again. Tommy was just 21, and felt that his life was over. Where could he find the sense in this tragedy which not only affected him, but his whole family as well?

There were basically four places where Tommy found the help he needed to carry on with life. First, his family was there from the first day of the accident. He was only about three miles from home when the car turned left in front of him. Family is God's first responder in times like this. Second, veterans from all over converged on Tommy during his stay in the hospital and his rehab. He knew that he was not alone and there were others out there going through some of what he was at that time. Third, he got a ton of support from fellow bikers. Back in Tommy's day, there were not so many motorcyclists around, and it was a far stretch between Harley dealers, but there were significant numbers of riders in the area who offered their time and support to Tommy during and after his painful ordeal, even some who only read of the accident in the newspaper and responded with messages of encouragement. There were many who helped him over the hurdles of doubt and pain which come when we endure such tragedies. Finally, Tommy had the Lord Jesus Christ to lean on, and some Christian friends who helped him greatly in his hour of need. They reminded him of these ancient words from the Bible, which apply to us today as well. "Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." Deuteronomy 31:6 (Hebrews 13:5b also).

Tommy learned to walk again, but he never got back on a motorcycle. He went on to become a scientist, and a college professor in Montana. He still suffered aches and pains for the rest of his life as a result of his injuries.

Nobody knows why the auto driver turned left in front of Tommy. He was never prosecuted for this "accident," which was OK by Tommy. The cardboard boxes containing Tommy's Harley eventually disintegrated in the rain and weather, and the Harley was raided and rusted and slowly assimilated back into the ground from which it came. Jesus Christ still promises to never leave or forsake us, and to save from sin those who trust in him. Pastor Sam



Pastor Sam Ministry Schedule for you to check out:

PETRO Truck Stop Chapel, Portage, WI
I-90/94/39 exit 108 (SH 78 exit)
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Chapel Service at 7 p.m.
Sunday Chapel Service at 7:45 a.m.
White Creek Church off State Hwy 13 on County H, Adams County
Sunday Service 10:30 a.m.
608-547-8198 fbcaf@aol.com

FROM THE DESK OF JOE WEIGEL:

JUNE: May was Motorcycle Awareness Month. All of the TV ads which our law firm ran in Wisconsin were the ABATE Motorcycle Awareness ad. If you have not seen it, the ad is a real attention grabber. It's purpose is to make sure drivers at a stop sign look both ways before pulling out; depicts an auto that did not look both ways; and shows a motorcycle unexpectedly crashing into the driver's side of the car. In 2010 and 2011 we were able to run thousands of those ABATE ads on TV. Not sure what the count is for May of 2012, not yet.

On another note, I moved my "main ride" from a full Dresser to a 2002 Heritage Softail. As I approach senior status (depending on your definition of senior) arthritis in my knees and shoulders made it difficult to manhandle the bagger when the engine is shut off. The Softtail is a different "ride"; but still totally enjoyable. Not sure how Penny will like the back of the Softtail for eight (8) days at Sturgis, but we will find out. Still keep an '87 Bagger in Door County; '93 Sportster near Antigo; and a '92 Low Rider in Florida; and enjoy the variety of rides. Full insurance coverage on all bikes gets expensive. Florida insurance coverage about three times the cost of same Wisconsin coverage. My son (the Judge from Verona) inherited my '94 Dresser and I am selling his '90 Dresser (cheap).

Injured?

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JULY: We spread the real meaning of Memorial Day through Wisconsin's "Run to the Wall" to Washington, D.C.

This Memorial Day weekend marked the 20th anniversary that our law firm has sponsored and bankrolled the Wisconsin Run to the Wall to join up with Rolling Thunder of over one-half million bikers in Washing, D.C. on Memorial Day. The purpose is to honor our veterans, especially those who did not come back, at the Viet Nam vets memorial wall. We've been sponsoring the Wisconsin contingent for 20 years.

We had roughly 300 motorcyclists gather at our office Thursday morning before Memorial Day, May 24th.

We left our office promptly at 9:00; headed south across the 35th Street viaduct to National Avenue; east on National Avenue to 10th Street; south for a block and east onto the freeway. Just before the freeway we were cheered on by 1,000 grade and middle school students plus their teachers; parents; and neighbors.

Milwaukee County Sheriff's department and Sheriff Dave Clark provided police escort; assisted by Milwaukee Police Department. We are proud to sponsor this event for the 20th consecutive year!